DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 026 212 RE 001 334

By-Dolan, Sister Mary Edward

The Effect of Federal Fellowship and Institute Programs in Reading.

Pub Date 26 Apr 68

Note-19p.; Paper presented at International Reading Association conference, Boston, Mass., April 24-27, 1968.

EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$1.05

Descriptors-*Federal Programs, *Inservice Teacher Education, Microteaching, Personnel Selection, Program Content, *Program Evaluation, *Reading Instruction, Teacher Education Curriculum, Teacher Improvement

Identifiers-Experienced Teacher Fellowship Programs in Reading, National Defense Education Act Institutes

The basic components of National Defense Education Act (NDEA) Institutes and Experienced Teacher Fellowship Programs in Reading are discussed; their contributions to the teaching of reading are evaluated. Their curriculums center around core reading courses, substantive content, and supervised experiences with children. Working with the programs are instructional and supervisory staff, teachers, scholars, and reading specialists who are selected on the basis of their potential contributions to the program. Constant evaluation is maintained. Specific programs are described in detail, and evaluation findings are noted. It is concluded that such programs are valuable assets to the teaching of reading. It is proposed that they be pilot programs for future graduate instruction. References and charts of specific evaluation data are included. (BS)

ED026212

IRA
Boston

Sister Mary Edward Dolan, PBVM
Professor of Education
Clarke College
Dubuque, Iowa 52001

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

THE EFFECT OF FEDERAL FELLOWSHIP AND INSTITUTE PROGRAMS IN READING

Session 21B - Teacher Preparation in Reading - Graduate

Friday, April 26, 1:30-2:30
Room 1E, War Memorial

RE001 334

We are now looking forward to the fourth summer for NDEA Institutes and the third year for Experienced Teacher Fellowship Programs in Reading. The question that naturally comes to mind is--What has resulted from this great investment of human energy, time, expertise, and money? Have these programs really brought about the changes in the teaching-learning situation envisioned when they were initiated? More particularly--Have these programs produced more

effective reading personnel through newly designed programs at the graduate level?

Today many criticisms are being leveled at teacher education. Critics claim that our programs are unchallenging, lacking in quality, redundant, ineffective in developing appropriate teaching behaviors, and are out of touch with the real problems of the schools. It is my belief that the federal institutes and fellowship programs challenge these criticisms. These programs are innovative approaches to high quality, integrated graduate study that train participants to be learning strategists and skilled communicators with the students in classrooms and clinics. This is accomplished through the design, content, and organization of the federal programs offered, the nature of the practicum experiences in which the teachers participate, the highly competent instructional and supervisory staffs that engineer the programs, and the on-going evaluations built into each program.

Before we attempt to examine the effects of federal fellowships and institutes on graduate teacher education, we should briefly consider their basic components: design, program content and organization evaluation, instructional staff, and practicum personnel.

Design

Anyone who has worked his way through the planning, writing, and execution of a proposal for an NDEA Institute in Reading or an

Experienced Teacher Fellowship Program will never be satisfied with a disjointed, fragmented program again. He has had to identify a particular set of needs; set up objectives to fill these needs; design a program whose content, activities, and materials meet the needs that have been identified and result in the fulfillment of the objectives. In selecting the participants, he has had to match the needs of the applicants with the objectives of the program he designed. Then he has had to evaluate the success or failure of the whole endeavor in terms of the objectives he delineated at the outset. In other words, he has had the opportunity to create and administer a learning experience in the field of reading where needs determined the program and the program matched the needs of the teachers involved in it. The program designers' activities flowed from need to objectives - to program - to participant selection - to evaluation. Thus a unity or wholeness was present from the inception of the program to its culmination.

Program Content and Organization

Reading fellowship and institute programs are usually centered around three components: core reading courses, substantive content, and supervised experiences with children. The core courses are planned to acquaint the experienced teachers with the theories,

approaches, problems, research, and materials of reading. Each area is presented, discussed, and evaluated in terms of the objectives of the program. Substantive courses in psychology, sociology, linguistics, and in other related fields are provided to feed and enhance the reading nucleus. The knowledge and skills learned in the core and substantive courses are practicalized through supervised teaching in classrooms and clinical experiences in reading centers.

In addition to formal instruction and practicums, a great amount of informal learning takes place in institute and fellowship programs. Most programs are en bloc and the participants have been chosen not only because of their needs but also because of their ability to contribute to the richness of the program from their own unique backgrounds of teaching experiences. A special lounge provides the setting for these informal learning experiences.

Evaluation

An on-going system of evaluation plays an important part in the success or failure of federal institute and fellowship programs. Through evaluative techniques, strengths of the programs can be discovered and weaknesses irradicated. Constant feedback from instructors and participants through steering committee meetings and staffings keep the programs dynamic and give the insight and thrust needed to realize the program's goals.

A few examples can indicate how on-going evaluation worked out in the development of our Experienced Teacher Fellowship Program in Reading at Clarke.

During the first year of operation, parts of our Experienced Teacher Fellowship Program were definitely weak. One of these areas was in the diagnosis and correction of reading problems. In our original plan, four basic courses (Psychological Testing, Diagnosis of Reading Problems, Correction of Reading Problems, and Clinical Practice) were to be combined into eight semester hours of theory and clinical work. During the first year, this goal of an integrated course was only partially achieved. Psychological testing, diagnosis and practice were integrated, as were correction and practice, but the complete integration of the four courses left much to be desired. Most of this was due to the pre-conceived notions and experience of the instructor. However, through the interaction of the professor with the fellows and other faculty members, the need for complete integration has been realized. The course has been totally revamped and is now being handled as it was originally envisioned--and with great success.

Another course, Reading in the Academic Disciplines, was a bold new venture. In this course, we wanted to bring together experienced elementary teachers, scholars from the sciences, arts and humanities,

and reading specialists to study the structures of each discipline. It was hoped that each group would make its own contribution to the solving of elementary school reading problems.

From the beginning, this course demanded more expenditure of time and energy than did any other course. Several factors entered into this. The scholars from the academic disciplines had heard of the sophistication of the fellows. At the same time, they were looking at their disciplines in a totally different way than had been their custom. It was also difficult for them to grasp the real purpose of the course since their background in the teaching of reading was not on the same level as their knowledge of their discipline. Frequently they attempted to teach too much in too little time. As a result, the scholars were somewhat apprehensive and insecure especially in their initial confrontation.

On the other hand, the fellows were a bit intolerant of the scholars' point of view. They failed to see the real value of the course until it had almost terminated. The coordinator of the course, a reading specialist, had not always oriented the fellows adequately for each venture into a new discipline nor had she used the technical skill of closure frequently enough.

Even though the course was on the verge of falling apart a few times, it was successful for many reasons. Scholars from the various

disciplines were given new insights into the problems of elementary teachers. Elementary teachers (the fellows) began to develop greater respect for the academicians and saw the sciences, arts, and humanities with new vision. The college instructors in education and the reading clinicians saw their roles in the teaching-learning setting with new perspectives.

A very frank discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the course by the fellows and the staff indicated that much had been learned by all groups and that if the weaknesses were corrected, the course could become a very valuable one. As a result, this year's plans include parallel teaching and interaction between the scholars and the reading specialists rather than a block approach. Needless to say, the goals of the course are being achieved much more effectively on the second round.

Another area that had to be worked out through on-going evaluation and planning was our Practicum in Developmental Reading. Its purpose was to implement the theory learned in the Foundations of Reading class, Learning Theories, Advanced Child Psychology, and Contemporary Children's Literature. This was to be done in the classrooms of our public and non-public schools one hour each day for one semester.

From the beginning the public and parochial school administrators were enthusiastic about the fellows teaching in their schools. The

teachers of the regular classrooms also seemed pleased to be a part of this new venture. The actual working out of this practicum, however, was another matter. To begin with, the fellows had been selected for their outstanding performance and potential in teaching so they were equal to or better than a number of the classroom teachers with whom they worked. We tried to make up for this by having the fellows work in pairs so they could stimulate one another and work with the regular classroom teachers as a team. This approach was somewhat successful. But it wasn't long until we knew we had to find more efficient ways to release the tremendous teaching potential bound up in the fellows. After much research and long discussion with all the personnel involved, we decided to try microteaching.

Microteaching is a scaled-down teaching experience with groups of four to six children for short periods of time. The teacher selects one particular reading skill (1) he wants to teach the children, for example, the author's organization of a paragraph, and plans a five to ten minute lesson to achieve this aim. His lesson plan includes not only the content he wants to teach but also a technical skill that will enhance his communication with the children. He can choose one or more skills from the following list adapted from the technical teaching skills identified by Allen (2):

I. Classroom control skills

A. Recognizing and obtaining attending behavior
B. Control of participation
C. Teacher silence and non-verbal cues

II. Questioning skills

A. Asking questions in general
B. Use of higher order questions
C. Use of probing questions
D. Student-initiated questions

III. Presentation skills

A. Illustrations and use of examples
B. Planned repetition
C. Closure

IV. Motivating skills

A. Set induction
B. Reinforcement
C. Varying the stimulus situation

V. Inquiry techniques

A. Establishing appropriate frames of reference
B. Student initiated questions
C. Inquiry training

While the teacher is teaching this lesson, a video camera and recorder are taping the teaching-learning interaction of the fellow and his class. At the termination of the lesson, the teacher views his performance and the children's on the videotape and critiques it with his supervisor. The teacher's lesson plan is then revised so that new and better communication strategies can be worked out to

improve his teaching and the children's learning. He then teaches the revised lesson to a new group of children, critiques it again while viewing the videotape and repeats this procedure until the skills are mastered.

From microteaching the fellow moves into the classroom to test his newly acquired skills on a larger scale. Needless to say, we have found microteaching to be an exciting and effective way to train the fellows to become strategists in learning situations and skilled communicators with students in the classrooms.

Instructional and Supervisory Staff

The last but certainly one of the most important components in the programs is the staff. The director, the instructors, and the supervisors must be specially chosen for the roles they play in the programs. Proper educational background, teaching experience, openness to and sympathy with the rationale of the program, willingness to plan and to revise plans, and the ability to produce and evaluate ideas and skills, and to challenge and to be challenged by students and professors are all important qualities needed by the instructional and supervisory team. Since the participants in these programs are experienced teachers in an *en bloc* program, it is expected that a great amount of learning will take place through interaction of

faculty and participants, and the participants with one another.

Effects of Federal Institute and Fellowship Programs as Judged by Participants

Inquiry scales concerned with the effectiveness of federal fellowships and institute programs in reading were sent to a sample of one hundred former participants. Eighty-four responded. Participants were asked to rate each item on a five-point scale: five-very good, four-good, three-adequate, two-inadequate, one-very inadequate, and zero-no opinion. The questionnaires sought information about four aspects of the programs: 1) the general effectiveness of the programs, 2) the effectiveness of the course content and practicums, 3) faculty and participants, and 4) the implementation of their program learnings into their local schools. A general discussion of each area follows.

General Effectiveness of the Programs

Participants reacted very positively to the general effectiveness of the programs. Eighty-three to ninety-three per cent of the participants gave the highest possible rating to items in this area. They felt the programs were a great challenge to their intellectual capacities, that in comparison to previous educational programs the quality of their institute or fellowship program was very outstanding, and that the programs stimulated to a great degree their

continued interest in teaching.

Effectiveness of Course Content and Practicums

The effectiveness of the core reading courses was rated highly. Ninety-six to ninety-nine per cent of the participants felt they had a good understanding of the reading process and the factors that influence it, a good grasp of the basic reading skills and of comprehension of current approaches to the teaching of reading. They also felt they could critically evaluate current reading practices in the light of research as a result of their study.

Contributions of disciplines related to reading, such as psychology, sociology, linguistics and statistics were rated very good by fifty-seven per cent and good by thirty-two per cent. Speakers from the various disciplines fared better with seventy-seven per cent giving a rating of five and seventeen per cent a rating of four.

Seventy to seventy-eight per cent of the participants gave ratings of very good to learning that resulted from practicums and laboratory experiences. The participants greatly appreciated the opportunity to use new reading methods and materials in the practicums as well as the facility gained in evaluating new materials and approaches to the teaching of reading.

Faculty Competence and Interaction with Participants

Ninety-five per cent of the participants who responded gave the highest possible rating to the competency of the faculty and their choice for their job. Ninety-two to ninety-three per cent rated as very good the overall effectiveness of staff and impact of the staff on the participants. Attitude of the staff to participants, interaction between staff and participants, and interaction among participants were rated very high by ninety-two per cent of the respondents. This was especially gratifying since one of the major aims of the institute and fellowship programs was to bring into being a community of scholars (staff and participants) who would grow personally and intellectually from the stimulation given by one to the other.

Implementation in Local Schools

Implementation into their schools of practices learned during the programs was given a rating of five by fifty-one per cent and a rating of four by forty per cent. However, the degree to which the participants were used in local in-service reading programs or in local professional meetings was much less spectacular. Only seventy-seven per cent rated their involvement as very good or good.

In this paper, we examined the basic components of federal institute and fellowship programs. We have also discussed how effective these programs have been in the past and in the present. What effect will they have on the graduate programs of the future?

NDEA Institutes were designed to upgrade and update in-service teachers. These summer programs seemed to give new life to those fortunate enough to be chosen to participate and seemed to whet the participants' appetites for more of the same kind of education. They wanted more programs where theory was balanced with practice, where instructors worked closely with experienced teachers, where experienced teachers learned from interaction with other experienced teachers, where graduate schools and instructors became involved in the problems of the local schools and the local schools came to the graduate schools for solutions to their educational problems. But these experienced teachers wanted more than a summer program. They wanted more time for in-depth study in an <u>en bloc</u> program and so the Experienced Teacher Fellowship Programs were born. Would it be stretching our imaginations too far to hope that these Experienced Teacher Fellowship Programs might be the pilot programs for our future graduate programs? That future graduate programs will reflect the unity of design, the flexibility of program content and organization, the built-in evaluations, and instructional staffs concerned

about and involved with pupils and teachers in the teaching-learning strategies that are central to our present Experienced Teacher Fellowship Programs?

References

1. Barrett's "Taxonomy: Cognitive and Affective Dimensions of Reading Comprehension" was used to identify comprehension skills. This can be found in

   Robinson, Helen M. (ed.). Innovation and Change in Reading Instruction. Sixty-seventh Year Book, Part II. Chicago, Illinois: National Society for the Study of Education, 1968, 19-23.

2. Allen, Dwight W., et al. "Technical Skills of Teaching." California: Stanford University School of Education, 1967.

RESPONSES TO INQUIRY SCALE

Participants were asked to rate the effectiveness of their federal institute or fellowship program according to the following scale: 5 - Very good; 4 - Good; 3 - Adequate; 2 - Inadequate; 1 - Very inadequate; 0 - No opinion.

General Effectiveness of the Programs	Responses by Percent					
	5	4	3	2	1	0
As a means of improving teacher competencies and knowledge in reading and allied fields, federal institute and fellowship programs were	93	5	0	2	0	0
In comparison to previous educational programs, the quality of your institute or fellowship program was	84	10	0	0	1	5
Challenge of program to participants' intellectual capacities	83	16	1	0	0	0
Extent to which programs stimulated continued interest in teaching	92	5	3	0	0	0
Effectiveness of Core Courses						
Understanding of reading process and factors that influence it	76	23	1	0	0	0
Understanding of basic reading skills	84	15	0	0	1	0
Understanding of current approaches to teaching reading	84	15	1	0	0	0

	5	4	3	2	1	0
Ability to critically evaluate current reading practices in light of research	71	25	3	1	0	0
Effectiveness of Substantive Courses						
Contributions to instruction from disciplines related to reading such as psychology, sociology, linguistics, statistics, etc.	57	32	10	0	1	0
Contribution of speakers from disciplines related to reading	77	17	6	0	0	0
Effectiveness of Practicums						
Learning resulting from practicums and laboratory activities	73	27	0	0	0	0
Learning resulting from demonstrations and observations	71	26	3	0	0	0
Experience with new reading materials, etc.	74	22	4	0	0	0
Use of newer methods of teaching reading	78	21	1	0	0	0
Ability to evaluate new materials	70	27	0	3	0	0
Faculty Competence and Interaction With Participants						
Competency of faculty and their choice for the job	95	4	0	0	1	0
Overall effectiveness of staff and impact on the participants	94	5	0	0	1	0

	5	4	3	2	1	0
Attitude of staff to participants	92	5	2	0	1	0
Interaction between staff and participants	93	5	2	0	0	0
Interaction between participants	92	5	3	0	0	0

Effectiveness of Implementation in Local Schools

Increased ability resulting from programs to motivate students, lead them to voluntary efforts, and encourage them to set higher standards for themselves	66	34	0	0	0	0
Change of attitude and teaching behavior as a result of the programs	70	23	3	1	3	0
Extent to which programs aided in originating new ideas and creating new concepts	75	18	3	3	1	0
Degree to which programs increased the use of teaching techniques	74	18	8	0	0	0
Degree to which practices and procedures learned in programs were implemented into school program	51	40	5	4	0	0
Assumption of broader role in reading instruction after return to school	70	29	0	1	0	0
Degree to which programs prepared participant to provide suggestions for improved teaching of reading	76	20	4	0	0	0

	5	4	3	2	1	0
Degree to which programs prepared participants to take an active role in evaluating and revising existing reading programs and courses of study	61	33	6	0	0	0
Degree to which participant was used in local in-service programs or in local professional organizational meetings	44	33	20	3	0	0